BLACKS AND HIGHER EDUCATION

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Thirty-five years after the *Brown* decision, there is mounting evidence that predominantly white colleges and universities still fail to embrace blacks as full citizens. Many observers agree on the causes. Few agree on the solutions. Together they paint a picture of subtle discouragement throughout the educational experience.

BY RENÉE GEARHART LEVY

When Michele Frank entered college in 1985, she brought with her a host of hopes and dreams. The first in her family to attend a university, she felt a special responsibility to benefit as greatly as possible. She made a lot of friends, got involved in extracurricular activities, and jumped head-first into her studies.

From the beginning, Frank excelled academically. She sampled courses from a variety of disciplines, finally majoring in English and political science. She graduated last May, near the top of her class, with a prestigious list of accomplishments: member of the national honorary Phi Kappa Phi; recipient of her college's top scholarship in the humanities; regional finalist in the national Marshall Scholar competition.

Speaking as a young scholar, Frank describes her undergraduate academic experience as 'wonderful'—challenging and enriching. As a citizen of her university, though, she found that pieces were missing.

She had expected college to be a place where people would be open-minded, motivated to revise the prejudices with which they'd been raised. Instead Frank, who is black, found reflections of society's broader racial climate. "Extremely disappointing," she says. "Just walking down the street and trying to make eye contact and having someone's eyes glaze over. It makes you feel like you no longer exist."

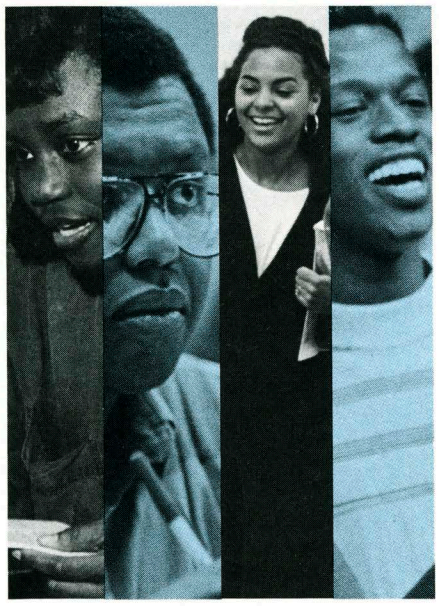
Frank, who attended Syracuse, is both typical and exceptional among black students at predominantly white colleges and universities nationwide. Despite every good effort by these universities to reverse two centuries of racial inequality, minority students still experience isolation, racial tension, and lack of opportunity when attending "white" institutions. Society as a whole, and universities in particular, have yet to break completely the cycle of alienation that too often keeps potential minority achievers at arm's length.

"At the end of my years at Syracuse I felt lucky and unlucky," says Frank, currently a Mellon fellow in English at the University of Pennsylvania. "Lucky because I had such a good experience, and that compared with stories I had heard, I sort of glided through, not really having any personal attacks on myself. But unlucky that [racism] exists anyway and could still happen to me."

Thirty-five years after *Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education* outlawed segregated education, predominantly white universities still struggle to provide, and then nurture, equal opportunity for all their constituents. Evidence of the problem abounds. In an age when more black students graduate from high school, lower percentages go on to college. The decline increases dramatically at higher levels, as lower and lower percentages of blacks pursue graduate study and academic careers. Meanwhile, reported incidents of racism on college campuses are on an upswing.

There is some cause for hope. Institutions now realize more fully that, as with most of society's problems, treating the symptoms does not heal the disease. Previous initiatives in equal access (affirmative action, targeted scholarships, and the like) do not address the pervasiveness of racism. Armed with that recognition, universities have begun to seek solutions that are more profound.

Doing so has become more than a moral argument. Changing demographics demand full integration of minorities into our institutions of higher education. A 1988 report by the Commission on Minority Participation in Education and American Life projects that minorities will constitute one-third of all school-age children in the United States by the year 2000. Already, in 25 of our largest cities and metropolitan areas, half or more of public school students come from minority groups. Colleges and universities must fully accommodate such students, or risk shutting out a significant portion of the population while society suffers from an undereducated workforce.



More than ever before, colleges and universities emphasize the importance of multicultural diversity. What emerges, according to many administrators and observers, is a sense that equal access to a "white" education is not the answer. Educational institutions, they contend, must change to reflect more accurately the ethnically diverse society in which we live.

"This is a great challenge for higher education," says Donna Shalala G'70, chancellor of the University of Wisconsin at Madison. "It's our unfinished business."

Coming Up Short

Fewer than 30 years ago, more than 90 percent of black college students attended historically black schools. Legal cases such as the *Brown* decision, and social legislation such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Higher Education Act of 1965 provided new access for blacks at traditionally white institutions. Black students, bolstered by aggressive recruitment and federal aid monies, flocked to their doors.

It appeared to be the achievement of an ideal: equal opportunity in education for all segments of society. For a while it worked. Between 1965 and 1975, black enrollment in higher education doubled, almost evening the ratio of whites and blacks who attend college.

And then things began to go wrong. While the number of blacks graduating from high school rose—one report indicates a 26-percent increase between 1977 and 1984—the *proportion* of blacks attending college took a sharp decline. Between 1977 and 1985, for example, the percentage of graduating blacks who then attend college dropped from 50 to 42. Though black enrollment rates have improved slightly in the past two years, blacks remain underrepresented.

RENÉE GEARHART LEVY *is a staff editor and writer, and former assistant editor of* Jet *magazine. Her previous stories include a profile of artificial-heart pioneer Robert Jarvik, which appeared in our June 1989 issue.*

Drop-out rates are equally disturbing. According to Vincent Tinto, author of *Leaving College* and professor of cultural foundations of education at Syracuse, black students who attend predominantly white four-year colleges graduate at a rate about 23 percent below that of their white peers. The reasons are varied, but Tinto and other educators agree on several underlying problems: inadequate preparation, cultural isolation, and lack of support, both financial and emotional.

For many black students at "white" institutions, the black faculty member, more than a teacher, is a mentor and friend.

One of those missing supports is the black faculty role model. While blacks represent about 12 percent of the U.S. population, they constitute only 2.3 percent of faculty members at predominantly white institutions. The conferral of Ph.D.s to blacks has declined 22 percent in the last decade.

"There have been increases for all other minority groups in terms of graduate and professional school production of Ph.D.s over the last decade and a sizeable decrease of blacks," says Ronald Walters, a political scientist at Howard University and president of the National Congress of Black Faculty. "To say there is an increase of *minority* faculty is to mask a very important problem of blacks alone."

A recent report by the American Council on Education (ACE) sums up the situation this way: "Without question, blacks are losing ground at most levels in higher education."

At the same time, college campuses experience an upswing in ugly racial incidents, according to the National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence. Since fall 1986, the institute has documented racial incidents, ranging from grafitti to open violence, at more than 250 colleges and universities. In October, a *New York Times* poll reported poor racial understanding as the top concern among American college students. Placed together on integrated campuses, students seem to mirror racial attitudes present in society at large.

Though the number of whites who commit openly racist acts is quite small, experts say the indifference of other whites creates an atmosphere in which intolerance becomes acceptable. Many blame affirmative action cutbacks during the Reagan administration for fostering the belief that blacks have already achieved societal equality. Unlike students of the late sixties and seventies, for whom redressing past patterns of discrimination was an admirable goal, white students of the eighties often feel victimized by special efforts made for minority-group members.

Blacks, on the other hand, largely feel that not much has changed. Their numbers are still low and role models few. Across the country, black students have organized and protested, not so much against a specific incident, but as a call for university administrations to address their needs seriously. Demands range from improving recruitment and retention of minority students and faculty to increasing need-based financial aid and adding ethnic studies courses to Western-based curricula.

It is not easy to find widespread agreement on each of these issues. Even among blacks, perceptions vary. Proposed solutions elicit little concurrence.

But increasingly educators and policy makers understand that disadvantage exists in a complex web. It must be appreciated as a cycle that begins with a young student's first inkling of intellectual capability. How likely is it that such motivations will be fully supported—throughout the educational spectrum—when that student happens to be black?

Questions of Access

If, in fact, more blacks graduate from high school, why then do fewer attend college? For many, the answer is money.

About half of college-bound blacks come from families with incomes of less than $12,000 a year. At the same time, student aid from the federal government and many foundations is rapidly shrinking. According to a recent ACE report, Pell grants, the principal federal aid program for low-income students, have declined 13 percent since 1980, when adjusted for inflation. The maximum grant, for which only the neediest students qualify, is $2,300 a year. Total federal student aid rose from $12.1 billion in 1980 to $15.9 billion in 1988, a 10-percent decline when adjusted for inflation.

"All of the data suggests there's a direct link, starting at about 1980, between the reduction of the number of minority stu-

dents attending higher education and, starting with Reagan's election to the presidency, the conversion of financial aid from gift aid to loans," says Reginald Wilson, senior scholar at ACE. "Disadvantaged students find it a great barrier if, to go to college, they have to take out $6,000 a year in loans. Sometimes their families don't make that in a year."

"It's a class issue and it has tremendous racial overtones," says Lynn Bolles '71, associate professor and director of women's studies at the University of Maryland and former chair of the Afro-American studies program at Bowdoin College. "It's just a dearth now for people trying to get through. When you talk about Pell Grants going down the tubes, work-study getting slashed. If your mom works at Burger King, how is she going to co-authorize a loan for you?"

"Certainly a more liberal student-loan policy would be a better one," says Thomas Cummings, vice president for enrollment management at Syracuse. "We've always been interested in the possibilities of direct aid to private university students. If you think the investment in young people's minds and earning power is an asset, which all of us in higher education do, then you would prefer policies that provided significant dollar support to higher education."

The money issue has another dimension. As the price of education rises, more students are forced down the price ladder, from private colleges to public, and from public schools to two-year community colleges. "A far lower proportion of blacks than whites attend their first-choice institution when they've applied to more than one college," says Thomas G. Mortenson,

LOOKING FOR THE ANSWERS

Black Student Admissions

College officials across the nation express concern about the sharp decline in black high school graduates attending college. Some of the most enterprising universities are attacking the problem head-on.

Last year, the University of Wisconsin implemented the Financial Aid Security Track Program (FASTrack), serving economically disadvantaged students from Wisconsin (a total of 10 each year). FASTrack supports students through a combination of grants, loans, and part-time jobs, with no loans during the freshman year.

Three hundred 10th- through 12th-graders at seven high schools are enrolled in a college readiness program sponsored by the University of Massachusetts. Students attend workshops in study skills, writing, and testing, and become eligible for one four-year scholarship awarded each participating high school every year.

One of the most ambitious programs was launched by Syracuse in 1987: an innovative partnership with the Syracuse City School District, called the Syracuse Challenge. The program is aimed at boosting the number of poor and minority students on campus and curbing the city schools' dropout rate. It serves as an incentive program for eighth-grade students that guarantees admission and financial aid to the University.

"We can't wait until students are juniors and seniors in high school to start talking with them about college," says David Smith, dean of undergraduate admissions and financial aid. "By that time, the only things you have to discuss is what they should have done when they were younger."

Under the program, students and their parents are required to sign a contract that guarantees students admission and financial assistance at Syracuse University, provided the students maintain a grade average of 85 or better, score 1000 or better on the Scholastic Aptitude Test, and earn a New York State Regents diploma.

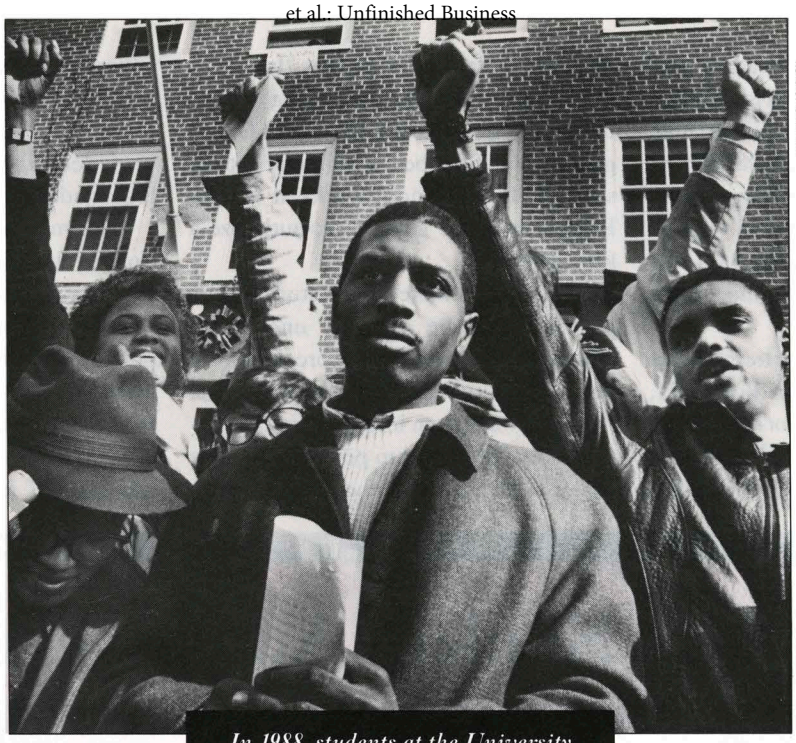
Although the Challenge is open to all students, it is expected to have the most far-reaching effect on minority populations, for whom financial need is disproportionately evident. "What this partnership essentially does is eliminate the major hindrance, which is money," says Robert Boney, assistant vice president for student support and development and director of the project. "It is expected that the groups within the school district who have not traditionally aspired to go to college will benefit the most."

Students taking the Challenge are assisted through a support program that includes in-school, after-school, and weekend mentor classes. During the summer, students preparing to enter high school are strongly encouraged to take part in the ninth-grade residential program, which is offered at no cost to students or their families.

Living in SU residence halls, students attend four weeks of ninth-grade preparatory courses including algebra, English, and earth and general sciences. "Our objective is to give students a stronger academic foundation and to build a sense of camaraderie that will sustain them through four years of rigorous study," says Boney.

There are currently 1,600 students enrolled in the Syracuse Challenge. Those successful from the first group will be eligible for admission in 1992, paying only what they can afford.

Boney believes that programs like the Syracuse Challenge are the solution to shortages of minority students at all levels of higher education. "You can't turn around a national trend, a national disgrace, overnight," he says. "The reality is what we're doing with the Challenge: put large numbers into the pipeline and give them the support. That's what it's going to take." —*RGL*



MICHAEL BLACKBURN

In 1988, students at the University of Massachusetts took over a university cultural center to protest racism on campus.

senior research associate with the American College Testing programs. "People from poverty-level backgrounds have virtually disappeared from private institutions in the last decade."

Richard C. Richardson Jr., associate director of the National Center for Postsecondary Governance and Finance, says that, in effect, students have been racially segregated by type of institution. After the civil rights movement, community colleges became open-admission institutions, focused on admitting students of different educational and cultural backgrounds, he says. Four-year institutions continued to pursue research and improve the quality of their programs.

"Some colleges and universities are elitist in that they are not open to everybody," adds Alice Stone Ilchman G'58, president of Sarah Lawrence College. "They offer opportunities that only some students, intellectually, can engage in or are willing to [engage in]. While *that's* not inappropriate, I haven't seen that either ability or intellectual curiosity or passion for learning are defined by race, sex, or socioeconomic status."

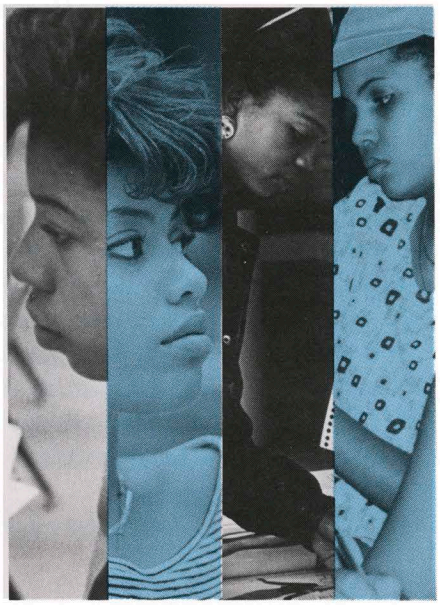
The Challenge of Retention

While getting black students through the door might be the first step, more and more predominantly white colleges are shifting their emphasis from recruitment to retention, with programs that combat the inadequate preparation and cultural isolation some black students suffer in a predominantly white environment.

Black students—who, again, are disproportionately poor—are also disproportionately from large urban areas and public schools that cannot compete with the suburban and private schools many of their white peers attended. "They come in simply not having the same academic preparation that their white classmates have had," says Barry L. Wells, assistant dean of Syracuse University's College of Arts and Sciences. "It generally takes them about two years to make that academic adjustment and to overcome any academic handicaps they may have had."

Predominantly white schools react in a variety of ways. Some do nothing. Others offer full-scale developmental programs.

Carson Carr G'82, associate dean of academic affairs at the State University of New York at Albany, believes predominantly white schools should look to historically black colleges for guidance in working with academically underprepared black students. "Their whole focus is to cater to that population," he says. He favors programs that raise students to a college-ready level while supporting self-esteem and appreciation of minority cultures. Too many programs, he says, deny students their culture.



Many institutions offer pre-college programs for inadequately prepared students during the summer before freshman year. In such programs students receive remedial instruction to "catch up" with their peers in basic academic skills. Some educators believe efforts should go one step further and address in a more targeted fashion specific needs of particular ethnic and racial groups, and even different individuals within those groups.

"In a democracy, many think that they have done what is appropriate if they make all opportunities available equally to all individuals," says Charles V. Willie G'57, a sociologist and professor of education and urban studies at Harvard University. "The truth is, not all populations start out equally, and each has a different range over which to travel to get to the same point."

"I think tailored special programs will be necessary," says Syracuse University Chancellor Melvin A. Eggers. "Obviously the minority population is no more homogeneous than the majority population. Each student comes with a different set of abilities and needs. There have to be special programs where that's appropriate, and mainstreaming when that's the right choice."

Pre-college summer "bridge" programs have proven so successful that some experts advocate similar programs for *all* black students, regardless of background or academic preparation.

"More schools should have extensive summer programs to help these students adjust to these environments," says Carr. "There are many minority students coming in who don't know what to expect and

they've got to get adjusted to the pressures of being a minority on a predominantly white campus. It's a survival strategy, not a punishment."

"I believe a pre-enrollment summer 'bridge' program for black and Hispanic students would be extremely beneficial," says Ronald R. Cavanagh, vice president for undergraduate studies at Syracuse. "We might be charged with racism, but that's a price I'm willing to pay if it helps these students to be more successful."

Others are less enthusiastic, reluctant to see blacks singled out for special treatment. "Absolutely bogus," says Maryland's Bolles. "The folks who need it are the ones who have been victimized by their school systems and just need to get over the institutional hurdles that were put in front of them. Some working-class white students are going to have a heck of a worse time than some middle-class black students."

"Once institutions make it seem like they're 'doing it for the minorities,' it makes it seem like we're incapable of doing it for ourselves, and many of us will

LOOKING FOR THE ANSWERS

Student Support

Because of the additional pressures minority students face, because they are disproportionately from disadvantaged backgrounds and inadequately prepared, colleges and universities are realizing the great importance of supportive services and are developing a number of programs geared to improving the retention of minority students.

At the University of South Carolina (USC), where the graduation rate for black students is higher than that of whites, students are urged to enroll in the University 101 freshman seminar course, which teaches students how to go about being successful at the university. "I think there needs to be a real commitment to helping minority students in the freshman year," says John Gardner, vice chancellor for university campuses at USC and director of the University 101 program. "If you don't do it then, chances are you're going to lose them."

At the University of Wisconsin, the local Urban League and Chamber of Commerce help link out-of-state minority students with local families in an attempt to encourage their adjustment to the community.

At Syracuse, the flagship support program is the Higher Education Opportunity Program, (HEOP) legislated in 1968 by New York state to provide opportunities to economically and educationally disadvantaged students at private colleges and universities in the state. During its 20-year history, HEOP has been credited with dramatically increasing SU's minority enrollment, while providing a college education for those who otherwise might have gone without.

Considered a model for other programs in the state, HEOP at Syracuse helps students bridge their initial disadvantage through an elaborate network of tutors, counselors, and advisors. Many of these services are available to non-HEOP students as well. The six-week, pre-college Summer Institute, required of HEOP students, is available to all pre-freshman admitted to SU. "HEOP was one of the first formal ways we began to look at students' individual learning needs and styles and developed a system of supportive services that were responsive to both their cultures and academic needs," says former program director Horace Smith.

But it's no longer alone. Minority Services, a unit within the Office of Student Assistance, provides extensive counseling and tutoring services, skill development workshops, and special programming (for example, a dinner for parents and students on Parent's Weekend) geared toward minority students. "We're trying to ensure the success of minority students by providing assistance and encouragement and letting students know about the services we have available," says Monty R. Flynn, counselor in Minority Services.

The office has also established a Student Mentor Program, which pairs academically successful minority students with distinguished faculty and staff members on campus. "This program provides role models that help students with personal growth and career guidance," says Flynn.

Minority students with an interest in and aptitude for science, mathematics, or engineering can receive an extra edge through the FOCUS in Science or Minority Engineering programs.

FOCUS, open only to minority and disadvantaged New York state residents, provides assistance to students in the areas of architecture, computer and information science, management, arts and sciences, and engineering.

According to James K. Duah-Agyeman, director of the Center for Academic Achievement, the program's mission is the retention and graduation of minority students and disadvantaged students in these underrepresented fields. "FOCUS serves as a socio/academic bridge from high school to college," he says.

The Minority Engineering Program (MEP), directed by General Electric executive Ike Prather, attempts to create a challenging atmosphere in which students wish to excel.

Challenging minority students to excel in math, science, and engineering is becoming a national trend, perhaps touched off by a highly successful 10-year-old program at the University of California at Berkeley, through which students begin substantive work in those subjects during their freshman year. It's estimated that at least 30 colleges have started similar programs, including Purdue University, UCLA, and the University of Illinois. —*RGL*

LOOKING FOR THE ANSWERS

The Graduate Experience

Encouraging minority students—particularly black students—into academia as a career is perhaps the most important task in creating a more culturally diverse higher education. Institutions and foundations nationwide are launching efforts to add minority people to the graduate school pipeline.

In Florida, a public-private partnership to increase the number of blacks seeking doctoral degrees was started five years ago. The Florida Endowment Fund for Higher Education awards 25 students annually up to $5,000 toward tuition and a $10,000 stipend each year for three years of graduate study at one of 11 participating institutions in the state. More than half of the awards have been in engineering, computer science, and the natural sciences—areas in which blacks are traditionally underrepresented.

Nineteen private, liberal-arts colleges—among them, Bryn Mawr, University of Colorado, Franklin and Marshall, Oberlin, Occidental, and Trinity colleges—have formed a program offering fellowships to minority scholars. Each college provides financial support for one or two fellowships. A dissertation fellowship and postdoctoral fellowship are also available. Students may qualify for tenure-track positions at the host colleges once they have completed their program.

The General Electric Foundation last year launched a $15-million faculty development program aiming to increase the number of blacks, Hispanics, American Indians, and women who earn advanced degrees and go on to teach business, engineering, and the sciences in higher education.

At Syracuse, the Minority Access Partnership Program (MAPP) aims to increase the number of minority students who complete graduate study and move into academia and industry, and to provide an opportunity for minority corporate employees to return to graduate school full time. The program is a cooperative venture between SU and regional corporations, funded jointly between the University and the State of New York.

The first MAPP Fellows, who entered SU this fall, are provided with special academic and financial assistance. Beginning in 1991, MAPP Fellows will also receive summer internships at local corporations.

In addition, the Graduate Readiness and Internship Program (GRIP) prepares 25 minority undergraduate students annually for graduate study. The 12-week summer program emphasizes study in engineering, the sciences, business, and math-related fields.

The SU Graduate School is also involved in a project to increase the number of Hispanic-American graduate students. Project 1000—a national effort of which SU is a founding member—hopes to encourage 1000 Hispanic students to pursue graduate study at SU by 1992. —*RGL*

feel like we are incapable," says Quentin Stith, president of the Student African-American Society (SAS) at Syracuse. "We don't want you to give us all the fish. We just want you to facilitate the fishing."

All black students, regardless of the quality of their academic credentials, are to some extent vulnerable to cultural isolation while functioning in a predominantly white setting.

Howard G. Adams G'79, executive director of the National Consortium for Graduate Degrees for Minorities in Engineering, located at Notre Dame University, says black students experience hardship because their needs are not necessarily met within the campus environment. "I can't get my hair cut on campus at Notre Dame. If you're white, you can," he says. "If I were a student, I'd have to catch three buses to get a haircut. So while I'm catching those three buses, if you're white, you're in the library studying."

"Black students have so much more to contend with that automatically there's less chance for academic success," says Craig McKinney, president of the Black Student Alliance at Duke University. "Besides general racism and ignorance, which we have to deal with every day, there's always attempting to keep our identity as black people. That takes a little more effort when you're in a predominantly white situation. It takes a little time away from the books."

People Apart

Another disappointing symptom within the undergraduate experience is a sort of *de facto* segregation often observed at predominantly white institutions. In the classroom and in the dining hall, whites sit with white students and blacks with blacks. Blacks often form their own campus organizations, ranging from fraternities and sororities to student government associations and campus publications. Blacks describe this as primarily a function of comfort—a way for small numbers of blacks to find one another and share interests. White students, though, often view black separatism as self-segregation.

Timothy Rey, a junior at Indiana University, where three percent of students are black, became active in the university's Black Student Union after his dormitory door was torched during his freshman year. "I knew that if I had to combat racism I couldn't begin by running away from it," says Rey, who is president of the organization. While his is an extreme example, black student organizations provide a support system in an unfamiliar and sometimes hostile environment, and possibly the only connection to black culture and other black students.

"There are many students who come here from a Harlem, a Bedford-Stuyvesant, or another ghetto in the country and they find nothing for themselves," says SAS's Quentin Stith. "They're forced to make a decision: separate or assimilate.

That's a decision we shouldn't have to make."

Black organizations allow black students to develop leadership skills, which in turn help them to cope with problems on campus, says Norris Williams, director of minority students affairs at the University of Oklahoma and advisor to the Big Eight Council on Black Student Government. He says, "These organizations help students develop the skills that give them more self-esteem, that allow them to sit down at a table and really discuss the problems that both groups might be having. They help them develop the skills to go out and mainstream better."

"A lot of white students claim that much of the burden of race understanding falls on black students—that black students are segregating themselves," says Tommy Semans, president of the Associated Students of Duke University. "They don't understand it to be a need for any minority group to develop cultural integrity within the group before they go out and express their culture to the white majority."

White Temple University senior Michael Stletzer has no problems with blacks forming their own groups. He just wants to be free to exercise the same right. Stletzer helped found the White Student Union at Temple last year in response to the university's affirmative action efforts, programs he terms "anti-white."

"What power you have in society depends very little on what color you are," says Stletzer, who comes from a poor family with nine children. "Most of my fellow students who are black had more opportunities to get ahead than I did."

Stletzer and Semans represent the range of white attitudes on campuses today. The average is probably somewhere in between, but, experts say, increasingly

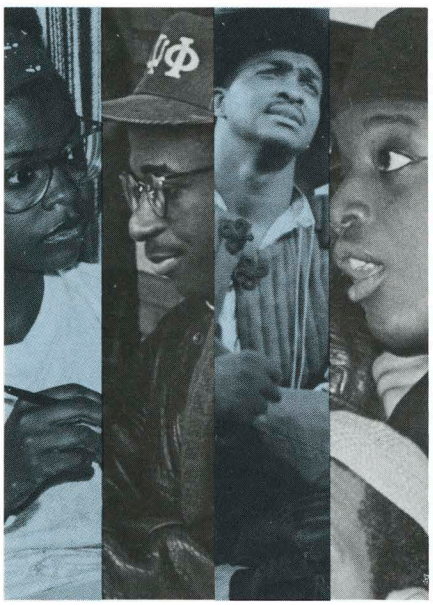
STEVE SARTORI

Black students at Syracuse demonstrated last spring in support of the University's African American Studies department.

conservative.

"There is very little initiative on the part of many white students to try to reach out, to try to understand, to try to learn something different from what they've been exposed to," says SU's Wells. "It's almost an intolerance to understanding."

Raymond Hall G'72, chairman of the sociology department at Dartmouth College, is conducting a study of racial attitudes among white students at elite colleges and universities. He believes the new racism is a result of competition in the classroom and workplace. "Whether real or perceived, white students find it difficult to reconcile the notion that they might not get a job because of affirmative action and equal opportunity," he says.



"What you're seeing on campus is persons [whites] who previously had a disproportionate amount of privilege granted to them because of their accident of birth," says Harvard's Charles Willie. "There was no reason for them to have preferential treatment, but they got used to it and soon believed they were entitled to it."

And while there may be an increase in campus racism, observers note another trend. Blacks students today are far less willing to "just take it."

"This generation of minority students just won't put up with the nonsense that their parents put up with," says Wisconsin's Shalala. "They don't dismiss what their parents would consider a minor incident."

The Professor Is White

Not only are black students isolated from their peers, many feel isolated from faculty members, who are predominantly white.

"I feel a lot more comfortable taking a course from a black faculty member than I do from a white faculty member," says Susan Chapman, a black senior engineering science and math major at Vanderbilt University, where there are fewer than 200 black students on campus. "I think that a lot of the white faculty are just as in the dark as the white students about black people in general, and don't really know how to deal with a black student."

Comfort is not the only factor. Margo Bailey, a doctoral student in public administration at Syracuse, believes that all students are short-changed by the lack of

faculty diversity. "It concerns me that my fellow students are going to be out there in a few years making policies that affect all different kinds of people and they haven't been shown another way of looking at things or analyzing problems," she says. "That lack of another perspective transcends all disciplines."

Chapman and Bailey are not alone in their desire for more black educators. At campuses across the nation there is a virtually universal cry from black students to diversify faculty and administrations. And while most institutions would happily comply, it's a task easier said than done.

There are about 18,800 black professors in the United States, 44 percent of them at historically black colleges. The shortage is acute and compounded by the fact that black professors tend to be clumped in certain disciplines—education and the social sciences—leaving other areas with minute black representation. Of the 904 Ph.D.s awarded nationally to blacks in 1987, only 11 were in mathematics, two in computer science, and two in the earth sciences.

For some institutions, the small pool has become an excuse for low minority representation on their faculties. For others, it's a challenge.

"As soon as we adopt a posture of 'there are only three or four out there,' we're going to be defeated," says Howard Johnson, associate vice chancellor for academic affairs at Syracuse and head of a task force on minority hiring. "Those three or four have to go somewhere."

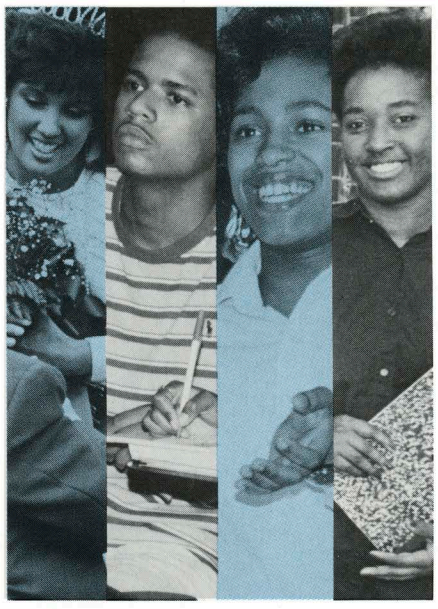
At Sarah Lawrence College, where students took over the administration building in protest last year, the number of minority faculty members has risen from 12 to 20. "The sit-in really suggested to our faculty that we had to be more imaginative about our faculty and administrative appointments, in terms of drawing from a broader pool," says President Alice Stone Ilchman. That included full, part-time, guest, and dual appointments, and waiving a Ph.D. requirement in subjects where "it's not pertinent." Says Ilchman, "Our experience has not been that, 'No, they're not out there,' but that if we put our mind to it we're able to do it."

Brothers of Omega Psi Phi at SU: Black organizations are often the only link to black culture and other black students.

The question then becomes, At whose expense?

"All we're doing is rearranging the chairs on the deck of the *Titanic*," says Robert Boney, assistant vice president for student support and development at Syracuse. "And when you play musical chairs, someone ends up out."

Small "white" schools and historically black schools can't compete with the offers



larger, wealthier universities are able to make, and suffer most. "If they're just going to rob smaller schools in order to achieve their goals, they're going to be part of the problem, not the solution," says ACE's Wilson.

He adds, "Here we have a guy like John Hope Franklin going from Brooklyn College to the University of Chicago. Then he gets a better offer and he goes to Duke. So you get a great historian moving from university to university, and they're paying him more money but he's still the one guy. The problem is that we've got to increase the number of black and Hispanic historians. We can't have one John Hope Franklin shuffling from school to school."

As with students, the added challenge is to support and encourage black faculty members once they're on campus. According to a 1986 National Research Council report, blacks who earn doctoral degrees are more likely than other minority-group members to choose academic careers, but they are less likely to be awarded tenure. The reason described by many blacks is a form of subtle racism present at all levels of higher education.

Frank Morris G'62, dean of graduate studies and research at Morgan State University, believes minorities with minority specializations have an especially hard time. "Much of the majority faculty has devalued minority areas of research," he says. "They will not promote or give opinion to people who publish in minority journals. So, once again it's a power struggle. What white faculty are saying is that they want carbon copies of themselves and things done just the way they do them or the way they determine. They do not want minorities who are different."

He says tenure committees also devalue service. "Minority faculty at predominantly white institutions are besieged by minority students who really need someone to talk to, someone to unload on, but this doesn't really count for anything.

Nor does it count when the minority is placed on a number of different committees as a token representative."

There is sometimes a lack of collegiality experienced by black faculty members, whose cultural isolation might not diminish with the addition of the title *Dr.*

"Predominately white campuses can be lonely places," says Howard Adams. "I'm the only black in my building. There are people who have literally passed me in the hall for seven years and never said good morning. To me, they're saying that I'm a nonperson."

For these reasons both Morris and Howard University's Walters, who between them have taught at such prestigious schools as Brandeis, Princeton, Syracuse, and Harvard, chose to work at historically black institutions.

"At historically black institutions we have a great many battles about the means, but we don't have battles about the ends," says Morris. "We all agree that the students have the capability and we all have great expectations. I did not see this at predominantly white institutions. They battle about the means but they battle about the ends too."

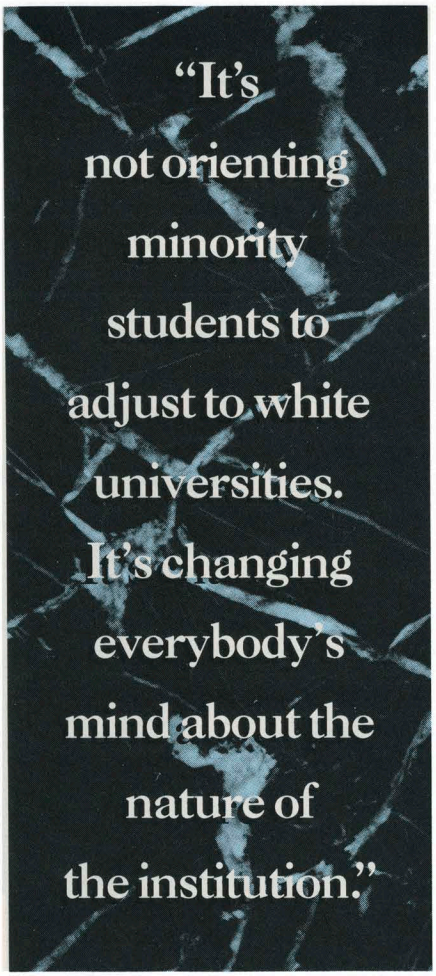
"Nobody here is questioning my integrity or the legitimacy of my work," says Walters. "Those things happen at white universities."

Terminal Degrees

Clearly, the long-term solution to the black faculty shortage is to increase the number of blacks attending graduate schools and continuing into academia as a career. At this level, though, blacks are again dissuaded by a combination of financial and psychological factors.

Many attribute the shortage of blacks in graduate study to the debt many have when they finish their undergraduate studies. Others cite a trend among not just blacks, but all students: foregoing graduate school in strictly academic fields in favor of business or law school, where greater material rewards seem certain.

"It's difficult, based on history, to justify the kind of sacrifices most minority people have to make just to acquire that level of education," says Denise Purdie G'81, assistant dean of admissions at Hofstra University Law School. "And to then turn around and find that the salary level you are receiving [as a faculty member] may not put you at ease financially—it just makes it less and less attractive."



For blacks, the temptation to forego teaching careers in favor of business and higher-paying professions is great. "It's only in the past two decades or so that minority students have had a real opportunity—with a much more realistic chance for success—to enter a variety of professions, and they've just opened up to it all," says Dartmouth's Hall. "An academic career does not appear terribly fruitful."

There is also the issue of communication. "One of the failures of graduate education [recruitment] is the failure to communicate that in many cases a minority student can expect to be fully supported through a fellowship, teaching assistantship or a research assistantship," says Leo M. Lambert G'84, associate director of Syracuse University's Graduate School.

"Graduate education in the sciences is free," says Howard Adams. "Most people are shocked when I say that, but if you're a good student, it's always been free."

Adams contends the real problem is that colleges and universities don't know how to compete with corporate America in recruiting talent. "Companies train their employees how to go out and recruit," says Adams. "Most universities don't have a system. They don't know how to do it. If a student comes out of school in the sciences, or engineering, or computer science, he or she is going to get five or six very good job offers. There's nobody from academia on the other side to refute that that's the only thing to do."

Many schools are beefing up graduate enrollments through additional assistantships and fellowships in an attempt to "grow their own" black faculty. "Hopefully when they get their Ph.D.s they'll consider staying here at this university," says SUNY-Albany's Carr. "We're looking at in-breeding and hoping other universities are doing the same thing."

However, many black graduate students feel they are subject to veiled racism within the academic establishment. Some experts, such as Meyer Weinberg, historian at the University of Massachusetts and founder of the Horace Mann Bond Center for Equal Education, claim the problem is more deeply rooted. "There is a widespread belief on the part of faculty and staff that minority students are incapable of learning, or learning on a high level," he says. "The institutions are set up with no procedures or processes for overcoming that or even acknowledging the existence of it. It's pretty clear that the failure to admit this leads to not dealing with it."

Charles V. Willie, who is preparing a book titled *Blacks with Doctorates*, says blacks in particular have difficulty finding mentors at predominantly white institutions. "Although whites might be mentors for blacks, or men might be mentors for women, the probability is that one would find a mentor more readily with one's own cultural group," he says. "At predominantly white schools there is simply an insufficient supply of women and minorities on the teaching staff."

"A lot of [white] professors are reluctant to take on black graduate assistants," says Walters. "Universities could make sure that the people with funded research projects take on minority students and teach them how to do research."

One World

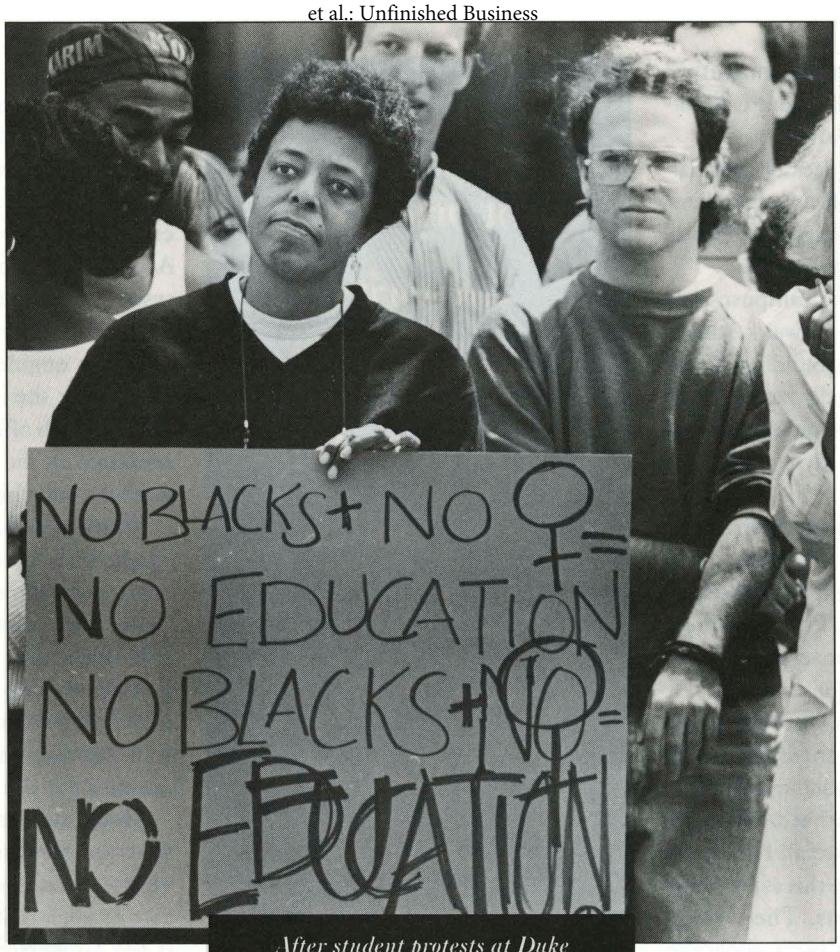
If it is true that every problem is an opportunity in disguise, then American universities face an historic opportunity to enrich themselves by fully addressing the cycle of black disenfranchisement. In so doing, they will create truly multicultural environments, healthy in that diversity.

It's a mission at the heart of what education is supposed to be about. "Higher education is, in a sense, an effort to free oneself from one's own limitations and parochialism," says Sarah Lawrence's Ilchman. "To extend one's world beyond the limits of your own personal experience."

"We're moving into a world that is not going to be predominantly white, or necessarily Western," says Wisconsin's Shalala. "And therefore students are going to need a sense of not only their only multicultural, multiethnic heritage, but a sense of other cultures, other languages, and other philosophies."

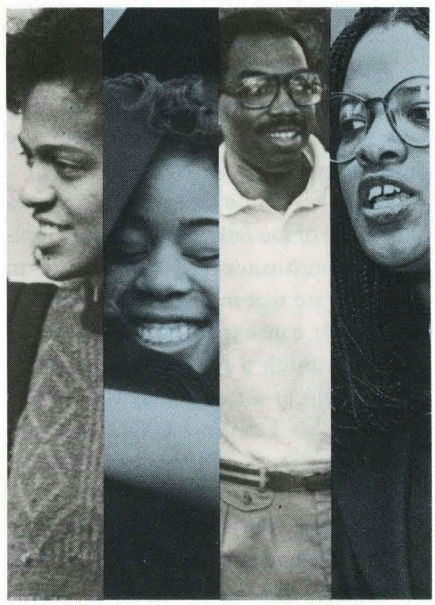
According to those in the trenches, it's going to be a long haul. "There's a big problem with understanding," says Tony Thurmond-Krajewski, a black senior at Temple University and president of the Temple Student Government. "A lot of white people are unaware about what black people are like. Blacks have to know about white people—we live with them, we work with them, we get to know them. But they never get to know us."

Ernest Smith, president of the Student Government Association at Syracuse, believes it is as much a black responsibility to help whites learn about blacks as it is a white responsibility to seek out understanding. "There are some people who have never ever seen a black person face to face," says Smith, who is black. "Now if you don't take these people by the hand and explain to them who a black person is and how he operates before a negative influence gets to them, then we're going to be looking at stereotypes flourishing again."



COURTESY DURHAM MORNING HERALD / BERNARD THOMAS

After student protests at Duke University, administrators implemented aggressive hiring goals for black faculty.



Black students say whites don't recognize the diversity of background and experience that exists among them—that whites don't judge blacks by the same methods they'd judge other white people. Craig McKinney, a senior pre-med major at Duke who entered school with impeccable credentials, believes most whites see blacks as "a bunch of affirmative action cases. I think, in general, white students really don't think we deserve to be here. I get the distinct impression they consider themselves superior."

With that in mind, universities nationwide are attempting to broaden their students' perspectives through cultural diversity workshops, increasing the diversity of campus programming and speakers, and instituting cultural awareness programming at freshman orientation.

"It's not orienting minority students to adjust to white universities. It's changing everybody's mind about the nature of the institution," says Shalala. "Our universities ought not to behave as if they're responsive only to one culture or one race." She believes schools also need to stop thinking of themselves as "predominantly white. That's an attitude too," she says.

ACE's Wilson believes institutions need to re-examine their undergraduate curricula. "The fact of the matter is that we live in a multicultural world but we organize our studies as though we live in a unicultural world," he says. "Liberal arts acts as though the only works of value have been written by white males, when four-fifths of the people in the world are not white. We ought to be teaching people about that world."

Many educators say that the efforts of individuals can make as much of a differ-

Photos for this story kindly provided by the University of Alabama, Bowdoin College, Dartmouth College, University of Kentucky, University of Massachusetts, University of Michigan, Stanford University, Temple University; and the Kappa chapter of Omega Psi Phi.

LOOKING FOR THE ANSWERS

Alumni Relations

In 1982, the Office of Program Development was created to cultivate friendships with Syracuse University's external minority communities—principally, black and Hispanic alumni.

Syracuse has a history of minority people attending the University as far back as the late 1800s. But all too often after they left the university black and Hispanic graduates were never heard from again.

While SU has always opened its doors to people of color, those who attended prior to recent years often felt they were not full citizens of the University. Says Robert Hill, former director of program development, "if you weren't involved in the fabric of campus life as a student, it is doubtful you'd seek that out as an alumnus."

Hill's charge was to restore relations among older minority alumni and establish relations among the young. "I thought the best way to get them involved in the affairs of the University was to show them the new Syracuse University, which is different from what many of them knew when they were here," says Hill, now vice president for public relations. His idea was simple yet ingenious: to bring black and Hispanic alumni of all ages back to campus to learn how Syracuse has changed.

The first "Coming Back Together" (CBT) reunion for black and Hispanic alumni was held in September, 1983. More than 300 alumni attended the weekend affair, representing the classes of 1929 to 1983. They came from California and New York. And they all were glad they came back.

It was decided to repeat the reunion every three years. Coming Back Together II was held in 1986, attracting 650 black and Hispanic alumni. Unlike the first reunion, which was primarily social, CBT II combined social activities with several days of workshops on career issues and opportunities to meet with current minority students. CBT III, held this past September, concentrated on national issues facing the minority community (see page 40). CBT: Jamaica, a four-day interim reunion, was held in Montego Bay, Jamaica, in November 1987.

Hill believes the reunions are successful because they target the successes, triumphs, and interests of the constituency. "The things that sustained you while you were here as a student are what bring you back," says Hill. "If the Black Celestial Choir really turned you on, then that's what you want to see when you come back. We plan events around the things that interested black and Hispanic students while they were here."

CBT, one of the first programs of its kind, is widely regarded as a national model. Minority reunions, though not as large in scope, have since been held at Cornell, Michigan State, and Vanderbilt University, as well as others.

CBT has spilled good feelings to other areas. Two years ago, the University embarked on the "Our Time Has Come" fund-raising campaign to establish a $1-million endowment fund for scholarships for minority students. Approximately $850,000 has been raised thus far, primarily from SU's black and Hispanic alumni.

"Our minority alumni have developed a great sense of ownership in the University," says Hill. "They are a part of its history and know they can make a difference in its future as well." —*RGL*

ence as university-instituted programming. "It becomes the responsibility of the white environment—the white faculty, staff, and students—to make the university comfortable and 'a home' for those who are non-white," says Robert Boney. "If I invite you to my house, then I take responsibility for your enjoyment. I don't invite you to my house and then say 'you're on your own.' I think there's a parallel."

"If everyone just did their part in reaching out to others, things would be a lot better," says Temple's Thurmond-Krajewski. He, like many others, believes college may be the last chance for blacks and whites to really know each other. "People are supposed to open their minds and ask questions and reason with the things they've accepted to be true before, to develop their own values," he says. "I think the university is the best place for that to happen."

"We live in segregated communities, we go to segregated churches, and we have our own little group of friends that look like us," says SUNY-Albany's Carr. "So if anything is going to make a difference, it has to be the colleges, because they can make a mark."

Syracuse's Chancellor Eggers agrees on the importance of cross-cultural exposure. "Universities need to be on the forefront of that kind of experience because we're preparing people for the next 50 years," he says. "To go through college without making the accommodation and understanding of how to live with one another will make the following years dreadful."

Charles Willie likens the importance of diversity to the biblical story of Noah bringing two of every animal on the ark. "Diversity is associated with our survival," he says. "It isn't an intellectual activity, but something we do because not to do so is to risk our survival. All of the explanations about why we haven't been able to achieve diversity are of no account if, in the end, our institutions disintegrate."

Eggers believes that if universities fully accept the concept of integration and a multiracial society, they will have to incorporate cultural features of the minority into the majority culture, creating institutions with a character reflective of all its constituents. "That's something we really haven't come to yet," he says. "But doing that will be the ultimate requirement."